ADVENTURES of a JAPANESE DOLL by Hy-Mayer PART 1

I.

She was born in old Japan on a fine spring morning. Her father was the great Chung-Wah, a maker of toys and things that are odd or pretty and who therefore enjoys the respectful affection of every Japanese child.

On the particular morning I am telling you about, Chung-Wah had been squatting on his mat the whole morning, making a coat of armour for the warlike son of the Mikado, when he turned round and saw the doll I am telling you about lying patiently on her back with her eyes wide open, just waiting for his finishing touches.

"O Ting-a-ling!" said the great Chung-Wah, who was a poet in his way, "you are graceful and slim as a willow reed, and I will touch your cheeks with the bloom of the young almond blossoms!" And he waved his paint brush gracefully in the air and painted her cheeks a delicate pink, so that she became the rarest and sweetest doll of old Japan.

II.

Now Chung-Wah had two beautiful daughters. Yum-Yum, the eldest, was betrothed to a youth who hunted butterflies by day, and spent the hours after sunset in fastening them on to beautiful paper lanterns. It is very difficult to do this without spoiling or tarnishing the gold and sapphire colour of their wings; so that this youth, betrothed to Yum-Yum, was occasionally a little sad, and a little thoughtful. But Yum-Yum would cheer him up by saying, "If the gold and the sapphire dust falls off their wings, what then? I will embroider blue and gold butterflies that will never fade on my little embroidery frame," for Yum-Yum was very clever with her needle at her embroidery frame. When she saw what a masterpiece of a doll Ting-a-ling was, she said, "O Ting-a-ling, your cheeks are like the almond blossom, and I will embroider you a beautiful gown all covered with flowers."

So Ting-a-ling became the most beautiful and the best dressed dollie in old Japan.

III.

Ah-Kymo was the great Chung-Wah's second daughter. She used to sit on the grass in her father's garden and sing a song to the moon, or the spring, or the clouds. Or she would dance a graceful slow dance in honour of the westerly wind or the summer rain.

Her songs were a never-ending delight to herself and to many who, passing under the wall of her father's garden, stopped to listen and to praise.

Now when Ah-Kymo saw the robe her sister had worked for Ting-a-ling, she said: "I will teach her a song I have just made to the gold fish in the lake at the foot of the garden, and I will teach her to dance like the petals of the blossoms when they fall on the green grass from the trees overhead, and many other things will I teach her."

So all through the spring and summer Ting-a-ling learned first to walk, then to skip, then to dance. She also learned to sing, to speak, and think. She might even have learnt to argue, only in Japan people never do that; they only turn their eyes down and smile.

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IV.

And now I must admit that all the Japanese chin-chins (they are Japanese spaniels, you know), who were once the family pets, became jealous of Ting-a-ling. "Bow-wow!" said the oldest, "you doll-child. All day long Yum-Yum bends over her frame embroidering flowers on satin to make a dress for you. When I pull the hem of her gown she doesn't even notice me."

"Bow-wow-wow!" said the second chin-chin, "before you came, Ting-a-ling, Ah-Kymo used to throw pebbles along the garden paths for me to run after; but now she is always busy teaching you to dance or skip, and even when I come running up with a stick in my mouth she hardly looks at me!"

"Bow-wow! Bow-wow!" chimed in a shriller voice, "was there ever seen such impudence in all Japan? We three chin-chins were the pets and darlings of this house; but since you've come, you naughty Ting-a-ling, we count for nothing!"

Ting-a-ling answered nothing, but smiled most wisely, for she knew, being a wise doll, that she would not stay for ever in Chung-Wah's house to be worshipped by those three misguided chin-chins.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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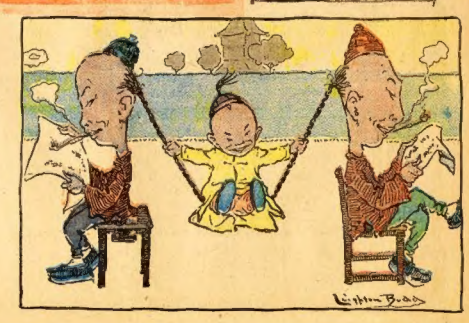
How Little Ching Got a Swing



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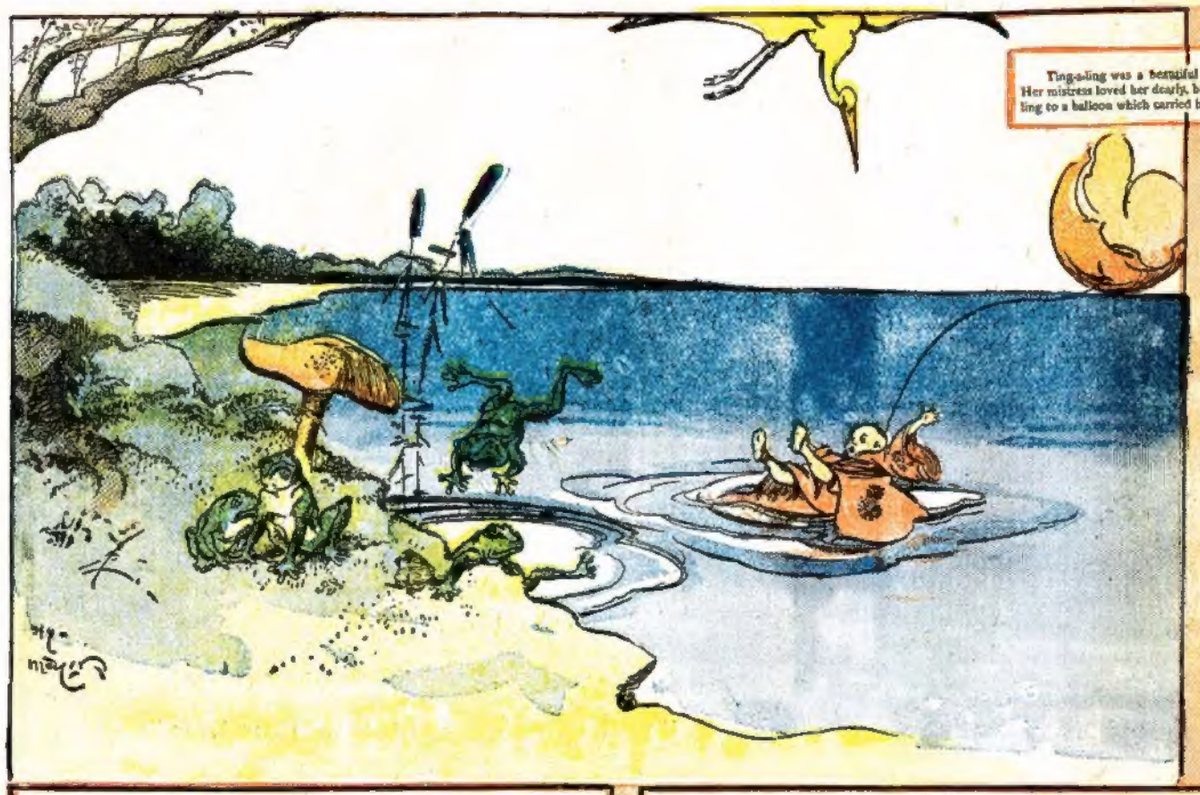
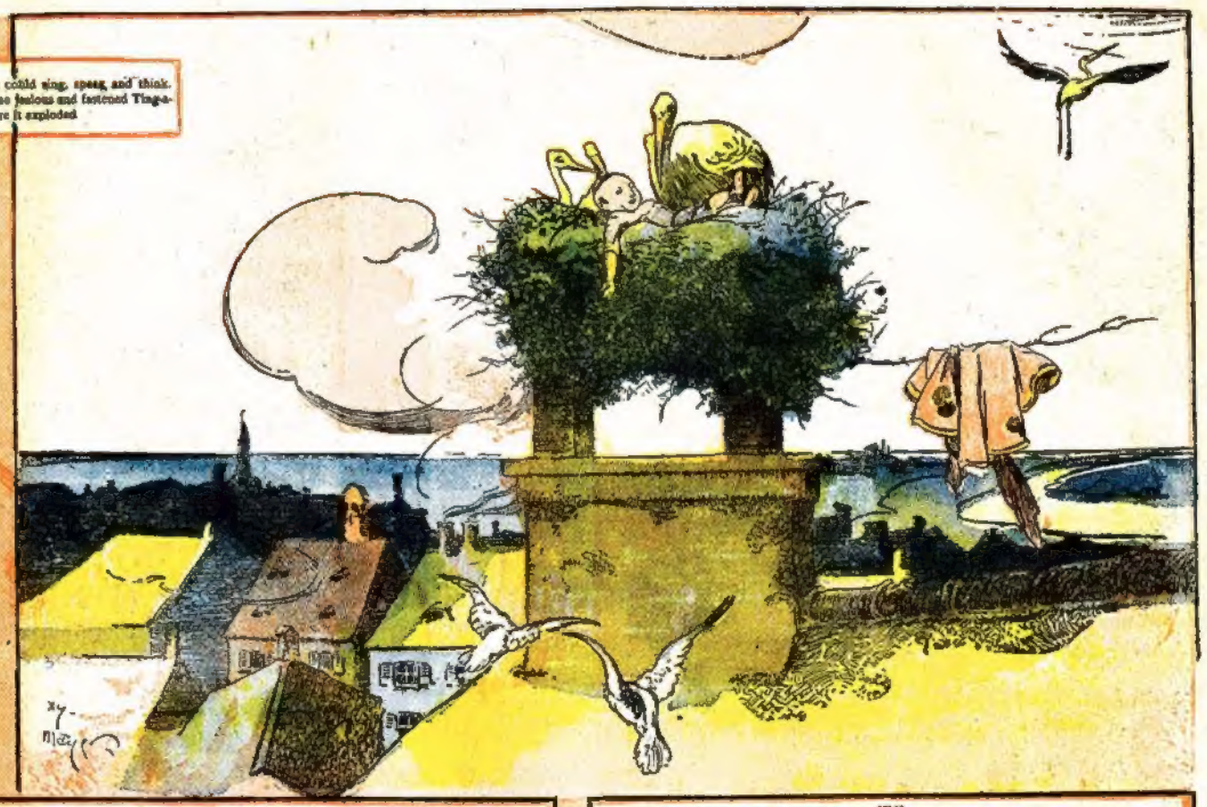


Ting-a-ling was a beautiful Japanese doll that could sing, speak, and think. Her mistress loved her dearly, but the spaniel became jealous and fastened Ting-a-ling to a balloon which carried her many miles before it exploded.



XIII.

"Dear me — said Ting-a-ling, as she took a temporary seat, rather sharply, in the middle of a pond.

But the Stork (who had been the cause of this disaster, by puncturing the balloon with his long bill when flying heedlessly through the air), was following close behind her. He dashed down and rescued our little friend before she sank, and flew up again, carrying her with him, before she had time to realise what was happening.

Now a party of froggies were playing croquet on the bank at the very moment when Ting-a-ling fell from the clouds.

They are a very excitable race, as you know, in fact they have to live in watery green places, half the time, to cool their brains. Their first impulse was to huddle together and to quake visibly at every joint. But as soon as all danger was over,

Brek-kek-kek-kek!!" said one, "what cheek, to come disturbing our games in that manner!"

"I jumped into the water," said another, "in my indignation."

"And I ran home," said a third, "to look for my sword and my pistols.

"Pooh!" said the biggest coward of all, "I wouldn't stoop to fight a thing tied to a bursted wind-bag!" and he swaggered off.

And, hearing the foolish little creatures, somebody, somewhere, laughed.

XIV.

Mother Stork was teaching the little storks to sing, and I must own she looked a little surprised when her husband deposited Ting-a-ling in the middle of the drawing-room carpet, in their German home.

"Good gracious, child!" she exclaimed, when Mr. Stork had told her everything he knew about her. "You must take off your wet clothes, and while they dry in the sun I'll tell you all about ourselves.

"Mr. Stork is fond of babies, in fact, whenever there's a baby to be carried to one or other of the inhabitants of this town, he makes no more ado, but seizes it in his long bill and goes and deposits it in its cradle. You can read all about it in Hans Andersen's Fairy Tale Book. But how did you get here?"

"I wanted to travel, you see," explained Ting-a-ling. "I started from old Chung-Wah's garden, tied to an air-balloon, and then—"

"Quite so," said Mother Stork, who hadn't been listening, "and do you want to get back to Japan as soon as possible?"

"Well, not *straight* back, you know," said Ting-a-ling, "but in a kind of roundabout straight way."

"Certainly, certainly," said Mr Stork brightly. "We will start to-night. Meanwhile, you had better make the most of your opportunities, and do a little sight-seeing. As our nest is built on the top of the highest chimney, you can see all you want to see by sitting on the edge and just shifting your position every now and then."

So Ting-a-ling did as she was told, and she saw the little German girls coming back from school, oh, so demurely: she saw the German boys walk up behind them and pull their flaxen pigtails, oh, so saucily: she saw the Herr Professor walk up behind the boys and pull their ears, oh, so readily: she saw the comely mamman make ready the bowls of new bread and milk for the boys and girls, oh, so soothingly; and the little boys and girls kiss friends and say their prayers before going to bed, oh, so drowsily.

XV

Ting-a-ling said "good-bye" to Mother Stork, and started her travels with Mr. Stork.

They flew over many high-steepled German towns lying asleep, and came at last to a great sea of sand. There were no trees or houses in sight; it was a great changeless, waveless sea of sand.

The Pyramids rose straight out of it, and further away Ting-a-ling saw a great lonely figure, so still and quiet that it frightened her.

"Who is that poor lady?" she whispered to the Stork.

"That is the Sphynx," said the Stork cheerily, for he was no respecter of persons; "she has stood there for thousands and thousands of years. There is nothing she doesn't know, and men have died like flies in that arid desert, without her even once turning her eyes their way. The sands have risen all round her, but they can't bury her!

"There's an Arab on his camel looking at her now," added Mr. Stork, as he flapped his wing jauntily—and then his voice ceased suddenly, under the stress of great emotion.

'Ting-a-ling, my child," he said solemnly, "you and I have seen a wonderful thing! The Sphynx, I do declare, Ting-a-ling, the Sphynx looked up at you!"

But Ting-a-ling unfortunately had seen nothing at all.

XVI.

"My child," said Mr. Stork, "the marvellous sight of the winking Sphynx has quite unnerved me. I am all in a flutter. My heart is beating at a fearful rate."

"I was just wondering, Mr. Stork," said Ting-a-ling in a kind and polite manner, "whether you wouldn't like to take a rest?"

"You are a very thoughtful doll, Ting-a-ling," said Mr. Stork, "and your kindness shall not go unrewarded. There are many camels who prowl about in the desert looking for bedouins and things; we will catch one and you shall ride him a little way. I am getting old, no doubt, and asthmatic. Let me see. Hm . . . ! We shall soon see one if we look carefully; always look carefully for the things you wish to see, Ting-a-ling. Ah! there he is!" And very swiftly he swooped down on to a dark brown patch in the yellow sand, and slipped Ting-a-ling on to what she felt to be a camel's back.

Camels are not exactly pretty things to look at, but they are good, obliging souls, and as obedient as possible. No sooner did this one feel Ting-a-ling's weight on his back than he stretched his long shanks and began to amble along without a murmur, following the shadow of Mr Stork, thrown by the moonlight on the sand just in front of him.

"Chu-chu!" cried Ting-a-ling gaily. (That is the Japanese for "three cheers," you know.)

TO BE CONTINUED.

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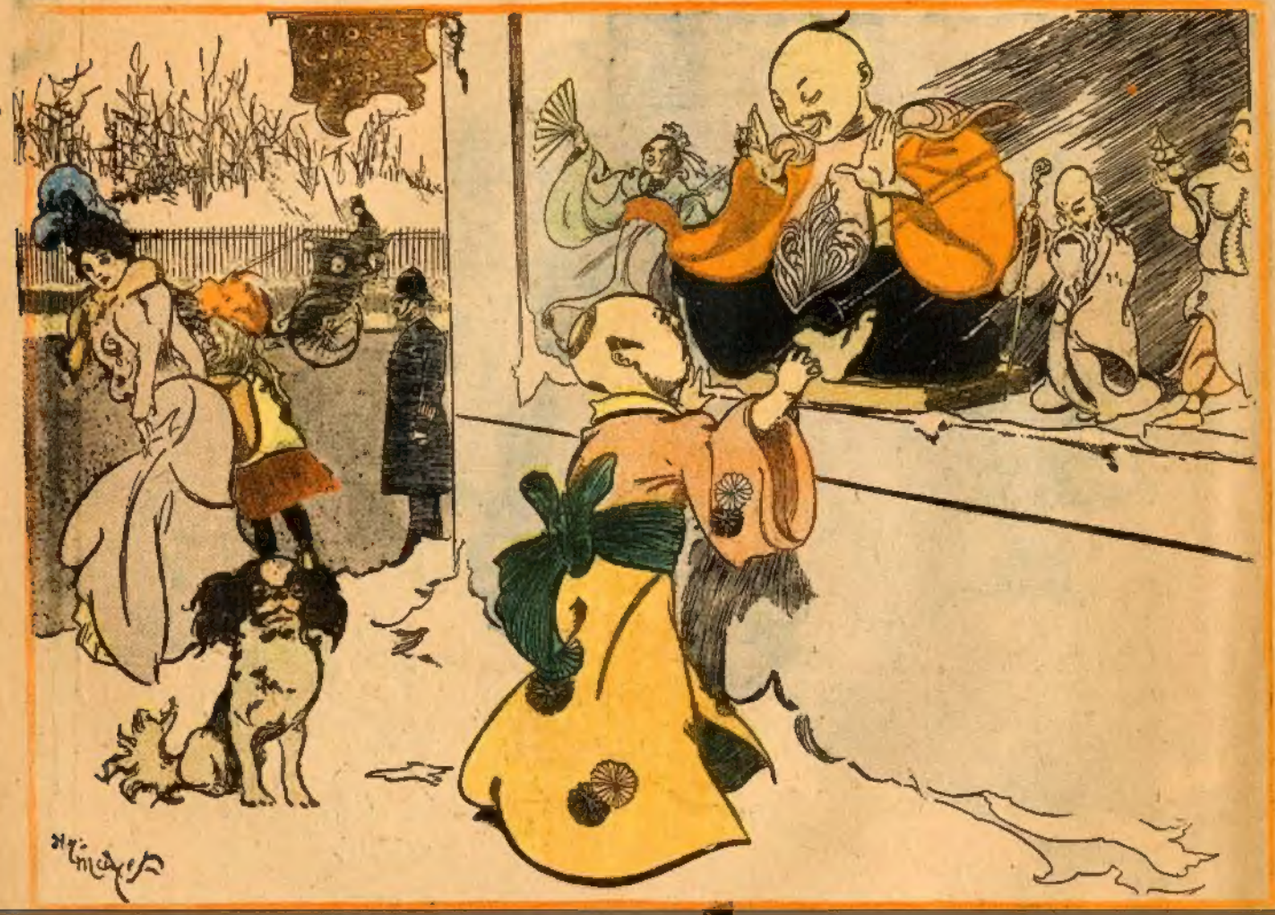

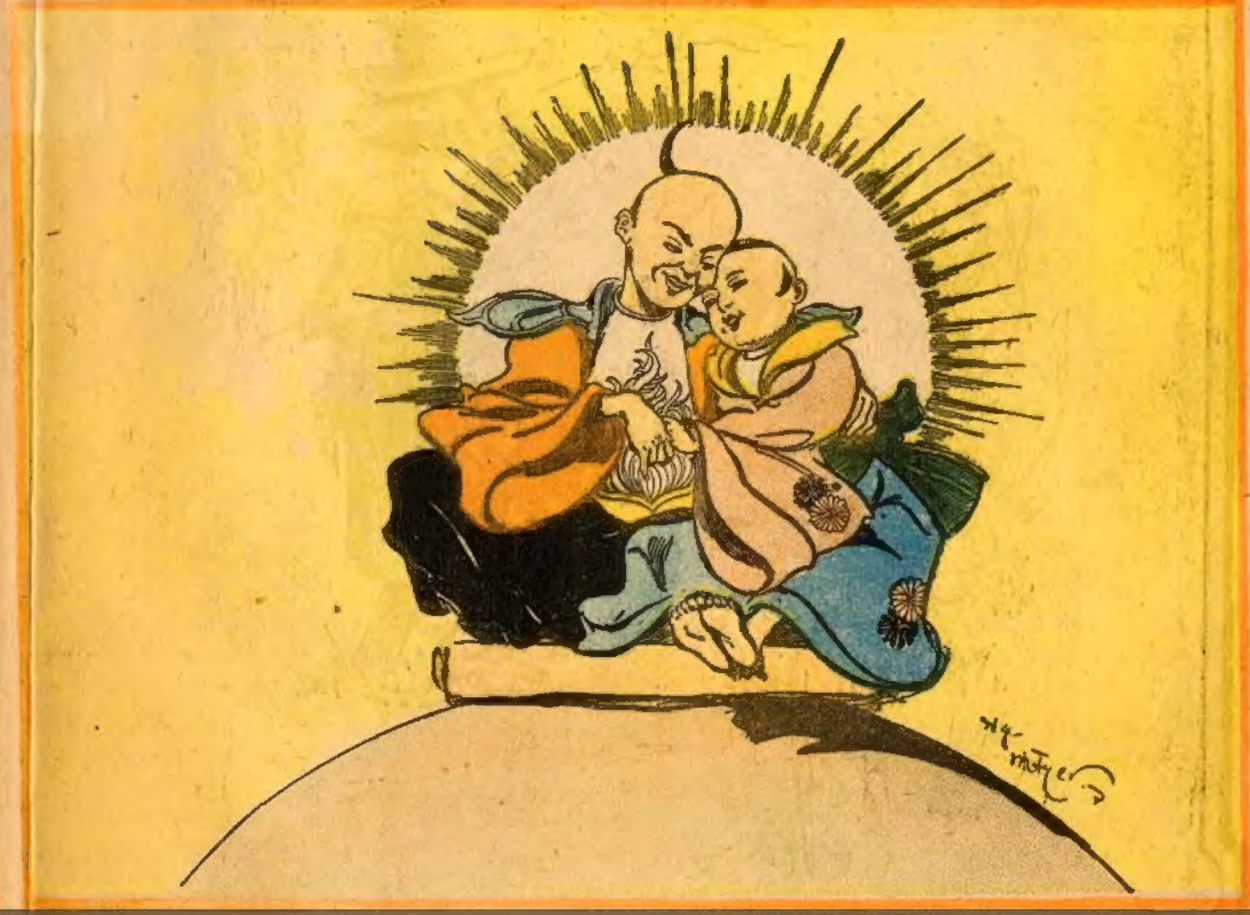

Hy-Mayer

CAUSE ENOUGH.

"I say, me good man, can you tell me why all these floors are to let?"
"Sure the Caseys got a pianny last week an' the six children are learning

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XXIX.

"Ting-a-ling, you're getting mischievous," remarked Mr. Stork, as they were flying towards London.

"I suppose travelling and seeing the world does give one some little assurance," answered Ting-a-ling in a detached manner. "How different I feel now from the ignorant, impulsive little thing you picked out of the pond backwards a long, long time ago!"

"Quite so," said Mr. Stork; but he smiled to himself.

They alighted somewhere near the Chelsea embankment. Chelsea is an old-fashioned and picturesque part of London, and unexpected meetings take place there. Mr. Stork had gone for a little stroll in the Apothecaries' Garden, but the over-venturesome Ting-a-ling wasn't pleased with the calm enjoyment the Garden could afford. Half afraid of what the consequences might be, she slipped out while Mr. Stork was sampling some choice young salad leaves, and trotted along the pavement. She ran past a greengrocer's shop, and [illegible] in at a newsvendor's; then—oh, if you could have seen what happened then! Ting-a-ling stood, transfixed by great emotion, staring with wide open eyes into the next shop window. For in that window, under a swinging sign, "Ye olde curiosity shop," was Ting-a-ling's enchanting friend, the Nodding Mandarin!

(The End.)

A RAILROAD TERM.

The Limited Male.